

## Sub-types of giftedness

Betts and Neihart (1988) suggest that gifted and talented students can be grouped into six categories, which are summarised below. These profiles are especially useful in identifying older gifted and talented students whose special abilities are less likely to be evidenced in their schoolwork.

**Successful** gifted students: These students achieve highly at school and are the group most likely to be identified as gifted and talented. They are conforming, eager for the approval of others, and perfectionistic. They lack autonomy and assertiveness, and avoid taking risks.

**Challenging** gifted students: These students are highly creative but frustrated, bored, questioning, and sometimes rebellious. They do not conform to the school system and often challenge school rules and conventions.

**Underground** gifted students: These students deny their abilities in order to fit in. They may be insecure, shy, and quiet, avoid taking risks, and resist challenges. Many are never identified as gifted.

**Dropout** gifted students: These students are resentful and angry because they feel that the system has failed to meet their needs. They are often perceived as 'rebellious loners', and may be disruptive or withdrawn. They fail to complete schoolwork, and their levels of achievement fall well below their ability.

**Double-labelled** gifted student: These students are gifted but also have a physical or sensory disability or a learning difficulty. Often their giftedness goes unrecognised because people fail to see past their disability. They can become angry and frustrated, and may feel powerless.

**Autonomous** gifted students: These students are confident, independent, and self-directed. They are intrinsically motivated and willing to take risks. They set goals for themselves and take responsibility for their own learning.

Bevan-Brown (1999) suggests that a seventh profile could be added to this list:

**Culturally diverse** gifted students:

These are students who are not identified as having exceptional ability. Some may go unrecognised because their performance generally is affected by low self-esteem and low teacher expectations. Their gifts and talents may not be recognised or valued within their school, or the values and behaviours of their culture may discourage them from displaying their abilities.

**The 'hidden gifted' include:**

- disadvantaged gifted
- disabled gifted
- those with learning difficulties
- underachieving gifted
- those from minority cultural and ethnic groups.